



# PLACE BASED WORKING- COMMUNITY SPORT AND EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

**Chelsea Piggott** *StreetGames/ Loughborough University*

**Michael Williams** *Watford Community Sports & Education Trust- Premier League Kicks Manager*

**Mike Dobson** *Saracens Foundation- Senior Development Manager*

# STREETGAMES- WHO ARE WE?

- National Charity launched in 2007
- Bringing sport (and its benefits) to the doorstep of young people living in low-income communities
- Work with a network of over 1,700 community partners who are embedded in local communities
- Sport England System partner & Sport Wales national partner
- Working with partners from wider sectors: such as VRUs, PCCs, Local Authorities & NGBs



# DOORSTEP SPORT APPROACH



# SPORTPLUS APPROACH



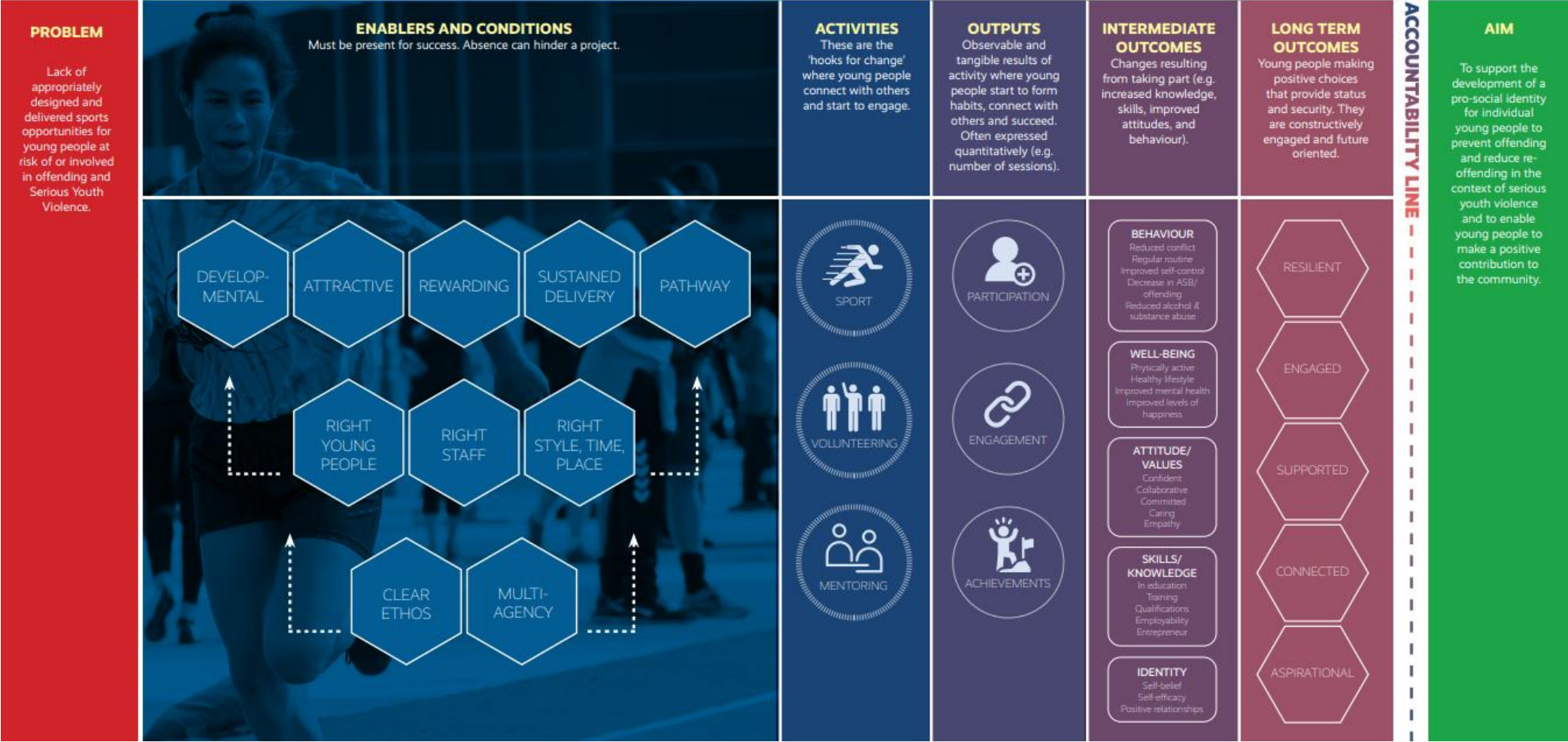
**TABLE 1: IDENTIFYING THE APPROPRIATE SPORTS PROGRAMME(S) FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

(adapted from Stephenson et al., 2011)

LOW LEVEL OF SUPPORT NEEDED			HIGH LEVEL OF SUPPORT AND EXPERTISE NEEDED		
PRIMARY Prevention		SECONDARY Early Intervention		TERTIARY Offending/Reoffending	
PROGRAMME APPROACH		PROGRAMME APPROACH		PROGRAMME APPROACH	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Universal/Open Access</li><li>• Neighbourhood/ community level</li><li>• Developmental provision to improve overall life opportunities</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Targeted at those considered at risk of involvement in youth offending</li><li>• Can be an individual/ family approach and/or targeted at geographical 'hot spot' areas</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Targeted intervention for those already involved in offending behaviour ranging from less serious to more serious offending</li><li>• Can also support rehabilitation programmes</li></ul>	
EXAMPLES OF SPORT PROGRAMMES		EXAMPLES OF SPORT PROGRAMMES		EXAMPLES OF SPORT PROGRAMMES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regular weekly sports activity sessions</li><li>• Opportunities for volunteering and training/ qualifications</li><li>• School holiday activities</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Targeted and/or 'hot spot' group sports sessions</li><li>• Sport-based one-to-one mentoring programmes</li><li>• Formal sport volunteering opportunities including training and qualifications</li><li>• Residential trips with outdoor adventure activities</li><li>• Can be linked to 'primary intensity level' sports programmes to provide additional opportunities if and when appropriate</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sport-based one-to-one mentoring programmes</li><li>• Targeted small group work using sport</li><li>• Sport volunteering, training and qualification opportunities</li><li>• Sport as one element of a more holistic programme run by other agencies</li><li>• Sport programmes to support rehabilitation</li><li>• Can be linked to 'secondary intensity level' sports programmes to provide additional opportunities, if, and when appropriate</li></ul>	
Building on a young person's strengths and developing a young person's pro-social identity					



# THEORY OF CHANGE: STANDARDISED METHODOLOGY



# ADOLESCENT VULNERABILITY

- **Nature Vs Nurture** biological predispositions and environmental influences
- **Multi-Level Influences** Individuals and their contexts influence each other continuously. A young person is shaped by their family, school, and neighbourhood, but they also influence these systems in turn.



Adolescent risk=

Mismatch between

a rapidly developing *socioemotional* system (reward-seeking)

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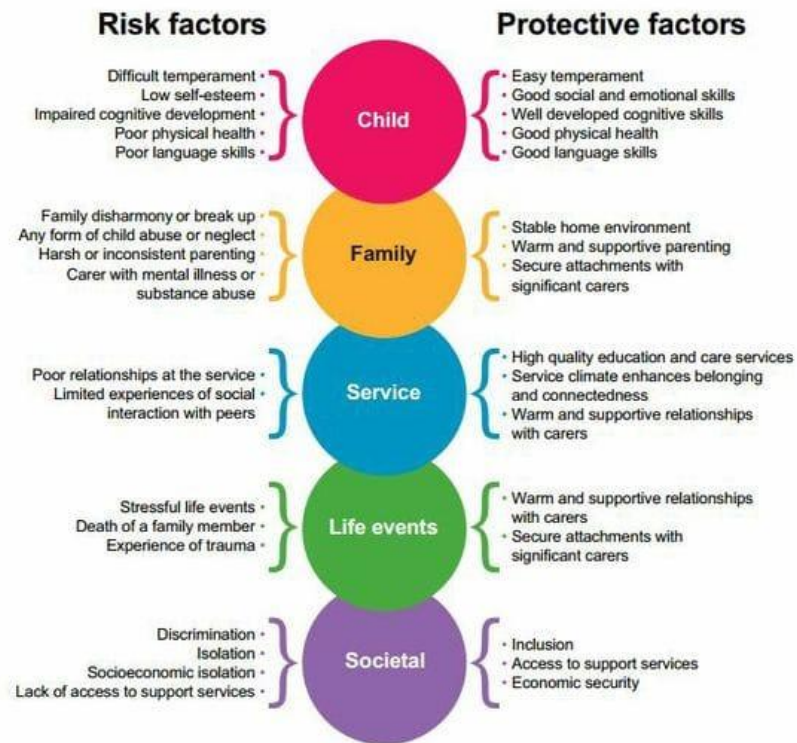
still-developing *cognitive* control system (self-regulation).

=

*developmental imbalance* makes adolescents vulnerable to risk-taking behaviours, with the risk often amplified in social contexts like peer groups

# WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABILITY

## Risk and protective factors



## YOUTH VULNERABILITY IS MULTIFACETED

- 4.5 mil CYP live in relative poverty
- Homelessness among families rose 78%
- 400,000 children classified as 'in need'
- Criminal exploitation risen by over 50% since 2022

## VIOLENCE AND EDUCATIONAL EXCLUSION ARE STRONGLY CORRELATED

- Suspensions up 118%
- Alternative provision placements up 82%

## THOSE THAT HAVE PERPETRATED VIOLENCE

- 53% previously suspended from school
- 74% had been excluded
- Children and young people with SEN are at significantly higher risk (45% engaged in violent behaviour)

(State of the Nation 2025; Youth Endowment Fund, 2024)

# POSITIVE INTERVENTIONS

- 73% of children who have offended received a formal consequence
- 10% of children were offered training or support to manage their behaviour.

(Youth Endowment Fund, 2024)

Indicates significant shortfalls in;

- efforts to address underlying causes of behaviour
- Preventing recurrence that could be addressed through positive activity

(Youth Endowment Fund, 2024)



## Sports programmes

Secondary or tertiary prevention programmes which engage children in organised sports or physical activity





# SPORT BASED INTERVENTIONS (SBIS)



**Sports-Based Interventions**  
Intentional, structured activities using sport and physical activity

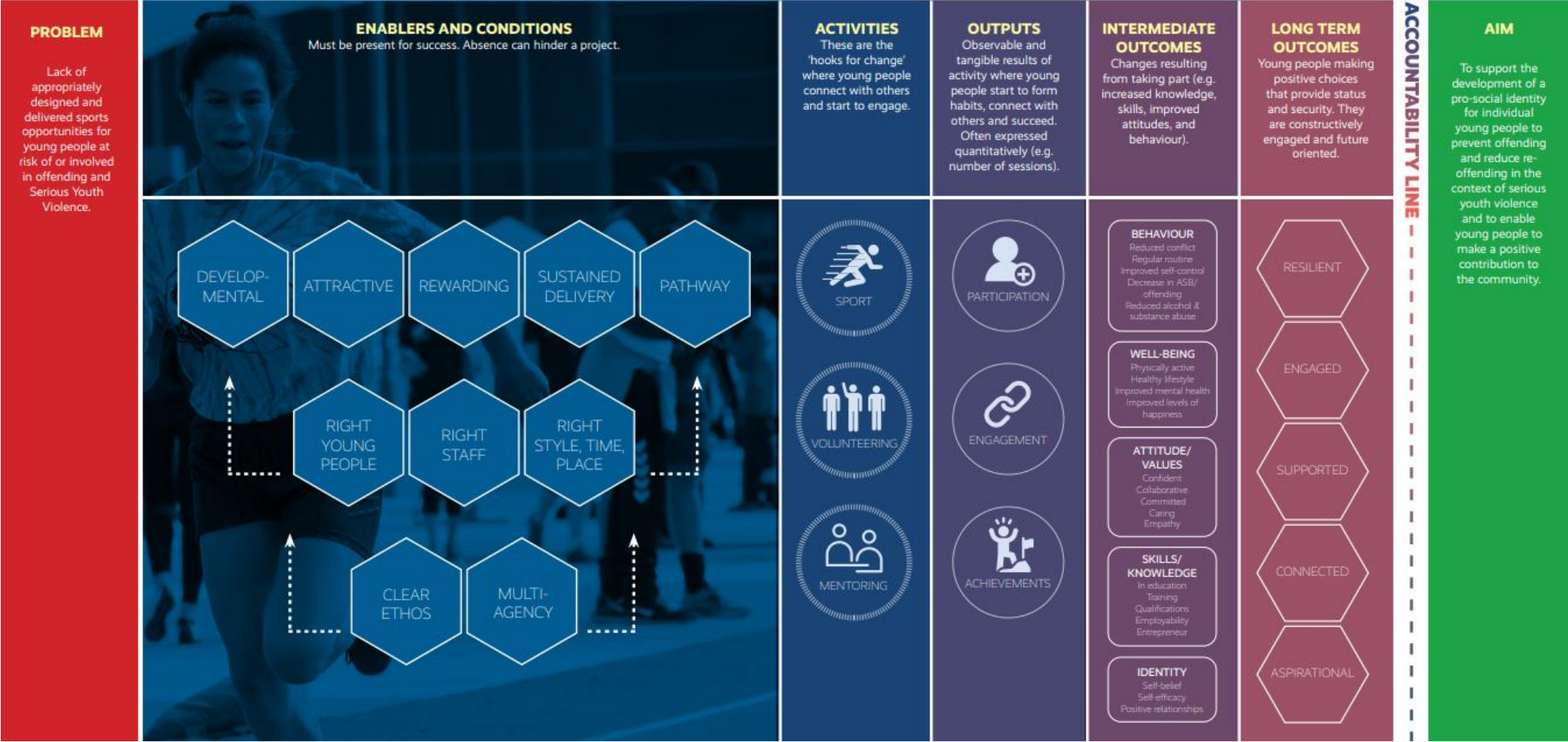
## What do they do?

They promote prosocial identity and pro-social relationships through facilitating life skills

## Life Skills

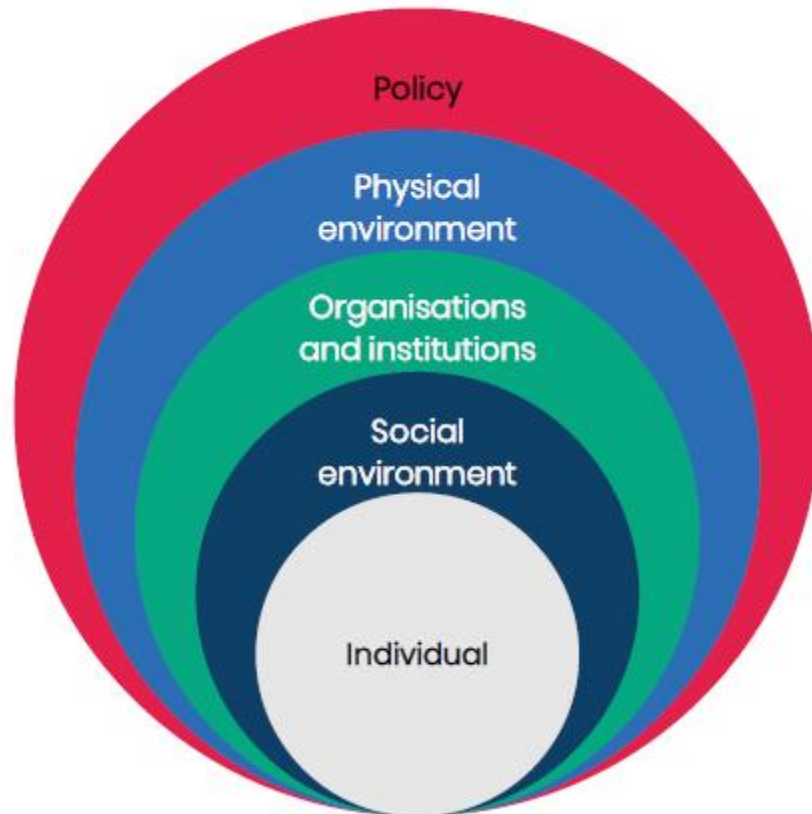
Competencies required to navigate everyday challenges – can be developed through intentional modelling and repeated practice

# THEORY OF CHANGE:





# SBIS THROUGH PLACE BASED WORKING-STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES?



## ► **Policy**

Laws, rules, regulations, codes, local and national strategies

## ► **Physical environment**

Urban / rural geography

Access to parks

Access to open, safe spaces

Transport communications

## ► **Organisations and institutions**

Local authorities

Leisure centres and other service providers

Educational settings

NGBs and sports clubs

## ► **Social environment**

Cultural factors

Religious factors

Social capital and cohesion

Racism, sexism, discrimination

## ► **Individual**

Demographic profile

Socioeconomic factors

Education

Physical literacy

Capability, motivations, attitudes

# INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

## Challenges:

- Many youth at-risk initially lack self-belief and are disengaged from traditional settings.
- Some struggle to transfer life skills learned through sport to other contexts (e.g., school or home).
- Risk of internalising failure if sessions aren't inclusive or positive.

## Strengths:

- S&PA help youth at-risk build self-confidence, resilience, emotional regulation, and a sense of achievement.
- Participation enables self-reflection and improved decision-making.
- Sport acts as a positive outlet for frustration and offers a sense of routine and structure.





# SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

## Challenges:

- Negative peer influence can reinforce antisocial behaviour, especially when grouping similar risk-level youth.
- Family dysfunction, trauma, and low engagement can hinder support outside of sport sessions.

## Strengths:

- S&PA can foster peer relationships, communication, teamwork, and understanding of different cultures.
- Coaches act as trusted adult role models, distinct from authority figures like teachers or police.
- Family engagement is enhanced through shared experiences like award events, helping rebuild relationships.

# ORGANISATIONS & INSTITUTIONS

## Challenges:

- Poorly managed sessions can reinforce exclusion or social hierarchies.
- Staff skill, personal bias, or lack of youth development training can negatively impact delivery.
- Limited contact time and large cohort sizes reduce ability to build deep relationships or track progress.

## Strengths:

- S&PA can act as a hook to further opportunities (e.g., volunteering, social action, youth voice).
- Empathy and youth work ethos among coaches is essential for positive outcomes.
- Organisations that promote a safe, consistent, and non-judgmental environment build trust and engagement.
- Coaches deliver tailored sessions and help youth set goals, encouraging autonomy and informed decision-making.

# PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

## Challenges:

- Stigma and labelling from the community can alienate youth and undermine growth.
- Negative peer cultures within communities limit positive behaviour change.
- Cultural ties, while providing belonging, can reinforce non-engagement.

## Strengths:

- S&PA can help challenge negative community perceptions of at-risk youth.
- Participation encourages community pride and engagement (e.g., respect for facilities, involvement in redevelopment).
- Long-term impacts can see young people later contributing positively to their communities.

# POLICY

## Challenges:

- Funding constraints restrict flexibility and innovation in programme delivery.
- Lack of structured training on 'person development' delivery means many practitioners rely on intuition or generic materials.
- Systemic barriers around resource allocation and recognition of sport as a youth development tool persist.

## Strengths:

- S&PA is better aligning with broader goals around diversion, inclusion, and positive youth development.
- Acknowledgement of recent developments in UK funding i.e., Place-Based Expansion, Serious Change Fund, Youth Endowment Fund



# ***SARACENS FOUNDATION***

**Mike Dobson** – Senior Development Manager

# CASE STUDY: SARACENS FOUNDATION

- We deliver **innovative, industry leading** projects, develop **sustainable** partnerships and provide vital support that will build **stronger, healthier** & more **connected** communities. Our **legacy** will be making our community a more positive place to live work & play.



- **Health – Education – Employability**

- **Sport – Movement – Mentorship**







# ***WATFORD COMMUNITY SPORTS & EDUCATION TRUST***

**Michael Williams** – Premier League Kicks  
Manager

# CASE STUDY: WATFORD FC COMMUNITY SPORT & EDUCATION TRUST



## Who We Are

- Registered charity
- Healthier, Happier, Stronger Communities
  - Hertfordshire, Harrow, Hillingdon
  - Over 30 projects
- 15,000 participants each year

# CASE STUDY: WATFORD FC COMMUNITY SPORT & EDUCATION TRUST

## Premier League Kicks

- Flagship community programme
  - ASB and Youth Violence
  - 2000 young people every year
  - 14+, Girls, Disability, Refugees
- Physical Activity, Mentoring, Workshops, Volunteering, Competitions, Social Action, Youth Voice



# CASE STUDY: WATFORD FC COMMUNITY SPORT & EDUCATION TRUST

## Premier League Kicks

Aims include...

- Physical and Mental wellbeing
- Sense of community and social responsibility
- Police and other stakeholders
  - Training opportunities





# CASE STUDY: WATFORD FC COMMUNITY SPORT & EDUCATION TRUST

## Premier League Kicks

100% have improved physical wellbeing and enjoy sport more

96% have improved interpersonal relationships and a positive attitude towards others

95% have increased confidence and self-esteem

90% have developed their skills and knowledge



# **CASE STUDY: WATFORD FC COMMUNITY SPORT & EDUCATION TRUST**



# **CASE STUDY: WATFORD FC COMMUNITY SPORT & EDUCATION TRUST**

## **Crime Reduction Through Sport**

- HSP & Street Games
- Risk of serious violence
- Sports-based mentoring, volunteering, Nationally recognised qualifications
  - Meriden Community Centre & Westfield Academy
    - Qualified staff

# CASE STUDY: WATFORD FC COMMUNITY SPORT & EDUCATION TRUST

## Crime Reduction Through Sport



- Referrals
- Outcomes to date...
  - 8 qualifications and 13 volunteering
  - Increased confidence and resilience
    - More positive about their future
    - Developed interpersonal skills





# WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- SBI life skill development in at-risk youth is shaped by **multi-level influences** rather than isolated factors
- It's about **relationships, context, and systemic support**. Effective interventions demand **multi-level coordination**, trauma-informed practice, and policy alignment
- Participating in SBI's can support the educational outcomes of young people through non-traditional settings that;
  - Right place - Right people
  - Right time - Right style





# THANK YOU

Chelsea Piggott | StreetGames  
E: [Chelsea.piggott@streetgames.org](mailto:Chelsea.piggott@streetgames.org)  
M: 07485918647